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WORKS IN PROGRESS

ESTABLISHED IN 1990 BY THE THURSTON COUNTY RAINBOW COALITION

Ramírez-Jiménez documents raise questions about OPD killing

By Kate Savkovich and Nigel Weiss

In the morning hours of Nov. 15, three officers from the Olympia Police Department shot to death 24-year-old Jose Ramírez-Jiménez following a car chase through Olympia and Lacey. On Nov. 19, Thurston County Sheriff's Office Detective D. H. Haller published a 22-page summary of the incident, concluding that the Olympia officers who did the shooting, Paul Bakala, Michael Hovda, and Charles "Chuck" Gassett were justified in having killed Ramírez-Jiménez. Using analysis of case files obtained through a public records request, this article will look critically at the detective's report and errors within it.

Detective Haller's Report

Like in any officer-involved shooting, an investigation was launched following Ramírez-Jiménez's death to determine whether criminal prosecution would go forward against his killers. To avoid conflicts of interest, police departments aren't allowed to internally investigate themselves. Instead, the investigations are conducted by detectives from neighboring police departments. This practice is meant to ensure investigative impartiality while making sure that experience in law enforcement is brought to the investigation, but the result is that the investigations are conducted and reports written by people who are nonetheless peers and associates of those who are under investigation.

Det. Haller's summary report of the compiled police files made recommendations, both tacit and explicit, which framed the conclusions that Thurston County Prosecutor Ed Holm would go on to make in considering whether to move forward with legal action. While Haller's explicit conclusions are a scant few paragraphs for a binder of case material three inches thick, the most specific assertion he makes to speak to why Ramírez-Jiménez was killed was that, "The suspect's actions placed the involved officers in fear of their lives and put the public's safety at risk to include the passenger in the suspect's vehicle." Following the submission of Haller's report, Holm issued his own report, essentially summarizing Haller's findings, and has thus far declined to pursue charges against the Olympia Police, or any of the involved officers.

Haller's report, however, contains errors that call into question more than just the validity of its conclusions, but the very integrity of the report. One of the most immediate causes of concern is that statements used in the investigation were not taken from the three officers who shot at Ramírez-Jiménez until Nov. 21, according to the interview transcripts--six whole days after the killing. That's nearly a full week that had elapsed before what were supposed to be the first impressions of three vital witnesses were taken. Unexplained in the report is why it took so long to take the statements from the officers who were the shooters, while the other two who had been present, Lacey Police Officers Michael Aalbers and Roland Sapinoso, were interviewed within hours of the shooting.

Also at issue with the long period of time that passed before the shooting officers were interviewed is that the physical evidence from the scene had been examined by investigators on Nov 19, before the interviews took place. This means the vehicle Ramírez-Jiménez was driving had already been searched and the ballistics already submitted by the time the potential suspects involved were compelled to give testimony about what the results of those examinations may have revealed.

Jose Ramírez-Jiménez

Under normal circumstances such waits are avoided because they open up the possibility of potential suspects changing their accounts of what they've seen. This should illustrate the impropriety of waiting so long to take statements from witnesses to a suspected crime.

When an incident, like a killing, occurs that warrants an investigation, potential

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Rising Down, Rising Up?

Perceptions of immigration in the Obama era

by Joshua Neuhouser

There was a moment, lasting approximately from November through mid-Spring, when many felt like our long national nightmare was finally over. And now the reality is beginning to sink in that though business in Washington certainly possesses more eloquence than it had over the past eight years, it still remains business as usual. "When a President tells you that he's going to be different, you believe him," said moderate gay activist John Aravosis on the Democratic administration's sudden, mystifying embrace of the discriminatory Defense of Marriage Act. "It's not that he didn't follow through on his promises; he stabbed us in the back."

And on the campaign trail early last year, Obama told voters in Kentucky that he opposed the practice of mountaintop removal mining, calling it an "environmental disaster" and promising to find "more environmentally sound ways of mining coal than simply blowing the tops off mountains." Earlier this year, the Environmental Protection Agency blocked six proposed mountaintop removal projects and began a review of the controversial mining practice, only to decide in its favor last month. The Appalachian Apocalypse, so-called by local farmers and environmentalists, has received a renewed green light.

And at the most recent May Day march in Seattle, immigrant groups chanted "¡Obama! ¡Escucha! ¡Estamos en la lucha!" (Obama! Listen! We are in the struggle!), which is less a militant declaration than an impatient reminder for an untrusted ally to follow through on his words. During the Bush administration, the needs and concerns of the Latino community grabbed the attention of mainstream America when, in the face of a bill in Congress that would make it a felony to provide any sort of aid to undocumented workers, millions of immigrants engaged in a one day general strike and business boycott on May Day, 2006. As the Los Angeles journalist Gustavo Arrelano would write a year later, "the sleeping Latino giant finally awoke."

The dramatic display of political energy killed the bill and the rest of the country began to awake to what a sizable minority had known for only too long. That otherwise law-abiding residents of our country who lack the proper paperwork necessary to justify their existence to the state are routinely fitted with electronic tracking devices was a fact acknowledged and even played for laughs in mainstream television shows such as Ugly Betty. That the existence of a privately-owned prison for immigrants known as the Northwest Detention Center, located in Tacoma's industrial district, became front page news – but only when a group of anarchists marched through the city's downtown in Nov. 2007, with much of the coverage focusing on a criticism of the protesters' disruptive tactics and not the facility's alleged human rights abuses.

Most dramatically, there was the nightmarish situation in Postville, where almost 13 percent of the population of the small Iowa town (and 20 percent of its workforce) was arrested and deported in a raid on a meatpacking plant, forcing the plant to close down and devastating the local economy.

> But while no work site raids had taken place since the one at Yamato, the system of everyday harassment and institutionalized discrimination, which some have labeled 'Juan Crow,' has remained intact.

Many of these trends had dated back to the Clinton era, when the North America Free Trade Agreement gutted Mexico's agricultural sector, forcing laborers across the border in order to feed their families. Or maybe we can date the seeds of the current immigration crisis back to the Reagan years, when Central American refugees were denied sanctuary by the US government. Or further, back to the deportations of 1954 known as Operation Wetback, or the guest worker programs which built our war economy during WWII, or the Mexican Repatriation during the Great Depression, or...it's hard to know when to begin, unless one traces things back to the Mexican-American War. Nevertheless, many had hoped that Obama would be different. This was a President, after all, who took one of his primary campaign slogans from César Chávez, and many political commentators have argued that Latino voters provided the critical votes that were necessary for Obama's victory.

The first test of Obama's promises of immigration reform came on February 24th, when Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) raided a production plant owned by Yamato Engine Specialists in Bellingham, arresting 28 workers, or a third of the plant's workforce. "The aftermath of the raid was very painful," says Rosalinda Guillen of the Bellingham-based nonprofit Community to Community, and she reports that teams of two to three ICE agents went to people's homes the next day, trying to force their way inside, in order to ask questions about their employers and co-workers. "Some people fled their homes because of ICE harassment and went to live with friends, and still have not returned." However, something happened internally at the Department of Homeland Security. All 28 workers were released with work permits and voluntary deportation order within a month, something that is completely unprecedented in the history of the agency. Homeland Security Secretary Janet Napolitano said she had not been informed of the raid before it happened, and opened an investigation into what happened in Bellingham. "I want to get to the bottom of this as well," she stated.

For some, Janet Napolitano's actions following the raid in Bellingham have been integrated into the narrative of liberal triumphalism that has emerged since Barack Obama took office this January. The President, since taking office, has promised to streamline the naturalization process and shift the focus of immigration law enforcement away from deportations towards border security. But while no work site raids had taken place since the one at Yamato, the system of everyday harassment and institutionalized discrimination, which some have labeled 'Juan Crow,' has remained intact. The activities of Immigration and Customs Enforcement are like an iceberg; the parts that are visible in the media (workplace raids) only make up a small portion of what they do. To see how that works, it is worth examining their activities in the South Puget Sound area over the past two years.

In 2007, the Washington Human Rights Commission held a hearing in Mason County where a Mexican man came forward to denounce the mistreatment of tenants at an apartment building in Shelton. The next morning, ICE agents swarmed on the building, arresting 16 tenants. Principal Steve Warner of the bilingual Evergreen Elementary School remembers that "we began getting calls from parents about being afraid to leave the house...they'd get their

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WORKS IN PROGRESS

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Please send text as Word attachments. Artwork and photos can be sent electronically or we can scan them for you as camera-ready/black & white.

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WIP reserves the right to publish in whole or part all submissions. For editing purposes, please enclose your phone number.

Articles may be reprinted. Please cite source.

If you don't see your issue being covered in Works In Progress, *it's because you aren't writing about it! (Or aren't finding someone else to cover it!)*

Send submissions to *olywip@gmail.com*. Send event announcements to *wipannouncements@gmail.com*.

Or mail to Works In Progress, PO Box 295, Olympia, WA 98507-0295.

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We will collectively endeavor to be sensitive and respectful to all those oppressed in this society, and their issues. However, if and when we should make a mistake in this regard, we expect to acknowledge it and to express regret for injury or insult given.

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Some back issues are available in the Timberland Library system. *Works In Progress* is being archived on microfilm by the UW Library.

"The problems that exist in the world today cannot be solved by the level of thinking that created them." Albert Einstein

WIP Schedule

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ANNOUNCEMENTS/EVENTS

Pastors for Peace border crossing

July 5, carpool leaves at 9 a.m., Grocery Outlet parking lot @ Division and Harrison intersection

The Pastors for Peace caravan delivering material aid to Cuba begins its U.S. trek Sunday when it crosses the U.S.-Canada border. This significant act, bringing awareness to the injustice of the U.S. economic blockade over Cuba, shows North American solidarity for our Cuban neighbors and provides people an opportunity to meet some exciting organizers from Seattle and Vancouver B.C. dedicated to the material aid cause.

To get on the bus and join us on our trip to the Blaine checkpoint, arrive early because we'll leave at 9 a.m. sharp. Expect an early evening return back to Oly.

POWER Outage: Clothing Swap

July 6, 5:30-8 p.m. at Long Lake (off bus route #68)

The first Monday of every month, POWER has an outage: a gathering to do something special with our community. This time it's a clothing swap potluck picnic in the park with swimming possibilities. Please bring a dish to share and clothes you don't want.

POWER is an organization of low-income parents and allies advocating for a strong social safety net while working toward a world where children and caregiving are truly valued and the devastation of poverty has been eradicated. oly-wa.us/power

20th Caravan to Cuba

July 7, 6-9 p.m., Fertile Ground, 311 9th Ave. (across the street from Olympia Timberland Library)

Challenging the U.S. trade blockade on Cuba imposed since the Cold War, Pastors for Peace (ifconews.org) is a group dedicated to gathering medical aid and construction supplies for the island nation.

After a Cuban food feast, featured speakers at the Olympia event will include Lisa Valanti, president of the U.S.-Cuba Sister Cities Association (uscsca.org) and local mechanic/organizer Rick Fellows. Both have been involved with the caravan since its 1992 inception and will each share a tremendous wealth of knowledge about Cuba. Also featured will be this year's caravanistas who will dialogue about their reasons for joining the caravan. An informal Q&A session will comprise the second half of the evening.

This event will feature Cuban-style food with vegetarian options, prepared by our local chef using locally grown ingredients (suggested $15-25 donation) and is intended to help raise funds for the caravan as it proceeds down to the U.S.-Mexico border. Any amount of general donation is not only appreciated but tax-deductible too. The event is welcoming of all beliefs and backgrounds and is oriented toward anyone who is curious or compassionate about Cuba. Local contact: Rick Fellows, rick@mediaisland.org

Bridges Not Walls presents Immigration Film Series

July 8, 22 7-9 p.m. Traditions Cafe, 5th Ave. and Water St.

On July 8, check out a locally produced documentary that takes a close look at Washington's borders and the actions of the Border Patrol and Immigration and Customs Enforcement on the Olympic Peninsula.Check out oly-wa.us/bridges for what's showing on July 22.

POWER Know Your Rights Workshop

July 9, 1 p.m., Family Support Center, 108 State Avenue, in the conference room at the top of the stairs

Learn more about your rights to public benefits and how to be your own best advocate. Explore your own knowledge about poverty and our economic system.

For more information contact POWER at 701 Franklin Street SE Olympia, WA 98501; 360-352-9716 toll free 866-343-9716; welfarerights@riseup.net; oly-wa.us/power; myspace.com/parentsorganizing; facebook.com/pages/Parents-Organizing-for-Welfare-and-Economic-Rights/

TC Pro-Net's 5th Annual Progressive Town Hall Picnic and Candidate Forum

Saturday, July 11, 3:30-8:00 p.m., 3516 Pifer Rd SE, Olympia, WA 98501; RSVP to sherri@tcpronet.org, 352-8225

Meet the candidates and your friends at this FREE backyard potluck! (We are inviting Thurston County Commissioner candidates, Olympia City Council and Tumwater City Council candidates.) Please bring a potluck item. Locally grown items encouraged. Salmon, chicken and beverages provided. Interactive workshops: Transition Towns—creating resilient communities for an unpredictable future. Donations to cover picnic costs gratefully accepted. Thank you.

The End of Suburbia - Oil Depletion and the Collapse of the American Dream

July 13, 7-9 p.m. MIXX 96 meeting room, Corner of State and Washington, Contact Barb, 360-878-9901

With brutal honesty and a touch of irony, "The End of Suburbia" explores the American Way of Life and its prospects as the planet approaches a critical era, as global demand for fossil fuels begins to outstrip supply. World Peak Oil and the inevitable decline of fossil fuels are upon us now, some scientists and policy makers argue in this documentary. What does Peak Oil mean for North America? And what can be done NOW, individually and collectively, to avoid The End of Suburbia?

LASO meeting

7-9 p.m. Wednesday July 15 at Media Island, 816 Adams St., Olympia

Come join this newly formed Latin American Solidarity Organization if you are interested in increasing awareness of events concerning countries and peoples in Latin America.

Secret Cafe fundraiser for Coffee Strong – GI Coffeehouse

July 26, 5-9 p.m., 1901 Crestline NW Olympia #41 Bus route, 3 blocks east to Crestline or 1 block west of West Bay Road

$10 donation, Mideastern delicacies, gourmet food, art, acoustic music, Sponsored by Unitarian Universalist Social Responsibility fundraiser.

Coffee Strong is a GI coffeehouse owned and operated by recent vets. Coffee, computers, concerts, events, and movie nights are served. We offer resources to active duty soldiers, vets and families (deployment, PTSD, sexual assault counseling and command grievances). Coffee Strong is a safe place for discussion re: war, and hardships of life in the military.

▸ **INVESTIGATION** continued from page 1

suspects are generally separated from others involved as soon as possible so there is no opportunity for them to talk about the incident and influence their individual recollections of what happened. But based on records analysis, there is reason to believe that the offending police officers communicated with one another. In fact, troublingly, case documents explicitly refer to such inappropriate communication having taken place. In his interview, Officer Bakala responds to a question from Haller about the passenger who had been in Ramírez-Jiménez's car during the chase by saying that what he, Bakala, knew about the passenger "was what I heard from [fellow shooter] Officer Hovda that day. He said that he cuffed her…"

Indeed, in his report, Haller writes that, after arriving on the crime scene, he "observed all three officers in a group" together. The scene log from that morning shows Haller as having first arrived at 7:26 a.m., about an hour and a half after Ramírez-Jiménez was killed. Officer statements and reports from the detectives on the scene don't mention, other than standing together "in a group," what the three shooters did in that time, but clearly they had not been separated as they should have been, and, as Bakala's statement indicates, at least he and Hovda spoke with each other, if not at that time, then sometime in the following six days before they were finally interviewed separately. The possibility that the involved officers colluded to change details of their official statements is unfortunately open and deserves further investigation.

Consistent date discrepancies in Haller's report present further problems. It is unclear what day Haller finished writing his report because the report, dated Nov. 19, mentions things, such as the officers' statements, that appear to have happened after that time. Being that the interviews with the offending officers are dated Nov. 21, two days after the date on Haller's report, it would appear on its face, if one accepts the dates given as true, that Haller hadn't even used the interviews to write his report. At worst, it is possible that the report was written with officer pre-constructed statements included and interviews staged afterwards to match what Haller had already decided to publish. More likely, granted, the dates published are just wrong, but it should give pause that such mistakes exist.

And there are yet more disparities. Haller's report states that on Nov. 20 at 9 a.m. he interviewed Michelle Muschke, the owner of the car Ramírez-Jiménez had been borrowing when he was killed, at her residence. Two pages later Haller says in the report that he conducted interviews with the three shooting officers beginning also at 9 a.m. on Nov. 20 (contradicting the dates on the interviews themselves). To give Haller the benefit of the doubt is to grant that he likely made multiple errors in his timelines, but this is a benefit that cannot be given without question. If he indeed did make multiple mistakes, the seriousness of such repeated errors in his reporting should not go unexcused.

At the time of writing, Det. Haller had not returned phone calls requesting an interview. Further records requests and analysis of case documents are underway for ongoing scrutiny of the official story of what happened the morning of Nov 15.

▸ **IMMIGRATION** continued from page 1

kids in whenever they could, but they might not be at school." It was about a week before many parents felt their kids would be safe at school, and Warner says that kids "talked about having to hide under the bed and being told not to come out until mom or dad told them to." And two years later, children on the elementary school playground still run inside, terrified.

The raid was covered in many newspapers and ICE officers were forced to defend their actions on National Public Radio. The Shelton raid fit what was becoming a familiar pattern, where undocumented workers and tenants find themselves facing deportation whenever they demand that their employers or landlords follow labor or building codes, or even demand wages owed. However, many smaller-scale incidents have occurred since then that have gone unreported. That November, a Shelton man did not like the way a Mexican man named Pedro A. parked his car in the man's neighborhood, and reported him to ICE. Pedro was imprisoned at the Northwest Detention Center for several weeks, and he and his wife Yolanda are almost certain to be deported.

A Guatemalan immigrant who has had legal status for two decades forgot to bring his green card to the Department of Motor Vehicles when renewing his driver's license. He was forced to stand handcuffed in the lobby for hours while waiting for his daughter to bring his papers, and while waiting for the skeptical ICE agent to be convinced that his papers were genuine. In September of last year, 14 Guatemalan brush pickers in the Olympic National Forest were stopped by the Forest Service on a routine permit check. However, after they were turned over to the Border Patrol they were not able to contact their families, who were unable to locate their husbands and fathers for days until, as usual, they appeared at the Northwest Detention Center.

A month later, a Guatemalan man who was waiting in line for a permit to harvest salal at the Ranger Station in Quilcene was wrestled to the ground without warning by a pistol-packing man with a shaved head, who began fighting him on the ground and then dragged him into an unmarked SUV and drove off.

Days later, the kidnapped man turned up at the Northwest Detention Center. And in early 2009, Child Protective Services took into custody the three children of an undocumented, single mother. She is almost certainly to be deported, and though she has several close relatives in Shelton who are willing to raise her children, they all lack papers and CPS refuses to let them have the kids. Meanwhile, ICE carried out a raid at an apartment complex in Lakewood on May 28, where a still-unknown number of people were arrested, and construction has begun on an expansion of the Northwest Detention Center. Incidents like these will continue, out of sight and out of mind to those outside of the immigrant community, until a comprehensive immigration reform bill is pushed through. Multiple Obama administration officials say that this is something which is not likely to occur this year. And that's if the bill will even address these problems.

However, perception is everything in politics. The real danger is not that immigrants and their allies will become complacent, but that a lack of genuine reform will be accompanied by an increase in violence from right-wing extremists. The sociologist Christopher Hewitt has written that the decision to embrace terrorism as a tactic always follows a familiar trend; a group chooses to use violence after it sees a period of progress followed by a sharp reversal (or the perception of such). Anti-abortion activists, for instance, restricted themselves to rallies and public relations campaigns during Republican administrations, when they believe that the powerful are on their side, but had escalated to assassinations and bombings in the Clinton years and have renewed their use of violence since Obama took office. And likewise, the anti-immigrant vigilantes of the Minutemen Project were feted on by prominent conservatives such as Arnold Schwarzenegger and Sean Hannity throughout the Bush years. Founder Jim Gilchrist was often invited to speak at universities despite his documented ties to white supremacist groups.

> Gilchrist's remarks that the Minuteman Project escaped his control and that he's "very sad, very disappointed" about the direction of the movement he helped create should be scrutinized.

The organization splintered in early 2007 over accusations of financial mismanagement, and as they were no longer united behind a leader determined to court mainstream America, the atomized Minutemen (whose behavior was never predictable to begin with) became capable of extremist actions that otherwise would have been ruled out by the larger group. And so Shawna Forde, the leader of the Minuteman American Defense splinter and former Everett City Council candidate, relocated from Washington to Arizona earlier this year.

Forde was convinced that she was being pursued by Hispanic gangs, particularly the Salvadoran MS-13. She believed that immigrant-run gangs and drug dealers had stolen so much from Americans that they were legitimate targets for robbery themselves, and the money would be used to fund the activities of the Minuteman American Defense. "It is time for Americans to lock and load," she said, and her brother reports hearing her talk about a revolution against the US government. Forde's primary cohort was Jason Bush, who had previously stabbed a homeless man to death in Wenatchee. Bush had ties to the Aryan Nations, and was known to brag about "killing a Mexican."

In Pima County's tiny hamlet of Arivaca, Forde and Bush broke into the house of Raul Flores, killing him and his nine year old daughter Brisenia and hospitalizing his wife. Shawna Forde and Jason Bush were only arrested last month after conducting similar "home invasions" in California, though fortunately only money and not lives were taken.

Coverage of this horrific hate crime almost always includes quotes by Minutemen who send their condolences to the friends and family of the deceased, and who emphasize that Forde's Minuteman American Defense organization was a small splinter group and that her actions do not speak for the movement as a whole. This ignores the fact that these Minutemen are usually representatives of equally small splinter groups and have no more authority to speak for the movement as a whole than Forde did. Even Gilchrist's well-publicized remarks that the Minuteman Project escaped his control and that he is "very sad, very disappointed" about the direction of the movement he helped create should be scrutinized for motive. Gilchrist had defended Shawna Forde's increasingly extremist rhetoric and erratic behavior right up until the moment that Mrs. Flores called 911. So, to what extent does he sincerely feel guilty about having unleashed a monster, and to what extent is he washing his hands of a political movement that had already largely washed its hands of him?

A group of right-wing extremists, no matter how violent they are, are only as dangerous as the social structure that condemns them, or allows them to flourish.

Hate crimes against Latinos have risen by nearly half in the past five years, but what is important is not just the increase in racism and xenophobia (which is distressingly predictable during an economic crisis), but how the authorities respond. The murderers of the Minuteman American Defense will likely receive the fullest punishment available under the law, but this has more to do with the fact that a nine year old girl was murdered than that it was a hate crime. To compare, a father of three named Luis Ramirez was beaten to death by six white teenagers in a small Pennsylvania town last summer. The attackers told his girlfriend, "You fucking bitch, tell your fucking Mexican friends get the fuck out of Shenandoah or you're gonna be laying fucking next to him."

When police arrived on the scene, they decided that pursuing the attackers was "not a priority," choosing to search the friends of the deceased instead. This year an all-white jury decided that the murder was not a hate crime, and the defendants were sentenced to six months. And this May in Mount Vernon, Ohio, a 17 year old boy named Robert Cantu was confronted by a gang of whites, yelling "Get the Mexican!" They put a noose around his neck, dragged him across a parking lot and threatened to hang him when Cantu's friends intervened and saved his life.

His attackers received ten days in jail. The message is clear: If you kill or threaten to kill Latinos, you will receive only the slightest slap on the wrist. Which makes sense, seeing as how privatized prisons have made such a big business out of locking up Latinos, and Immigration and Customs Enforcement has committed to quotas of 1,000 arrests per team. To punish hate crimes in a harsher manner might suggest that immigrants might be human, and that making money off of their incarceration might be immoral. And so we come full circle to government policy on immigration again. Which way forward?

Joshua Neuhouser is a regular contributor to WIP. He can be reached at rotatingsushi@gmail.com

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An interview with City Council candidate Stephen Buxbaum

by Janet Blanding

Works In Progress: Tell us a little bit about your background. What experiences have you had that prepare you for serving as a councilmember?

Stephen Buxbaum: I have over 25 years of professional experience helping cities build affordable housing, financing public facilities and helping small businesses create jobs in their communities. I have run some of Washington state's most successful grant and loan programs, including the Housing Trust Fund, as well as programs that address homelessness, and the Community Development Block Grant program, which supports projects all over the state doing housing rehabilitation, economic development, infrastructure projects.

And haven't you been involved with the Dispute Resolution Center, as well?

I have been active in the community for 32 years. In 1977 I served on the Board of the Olympia Food Coop. I was also on the Thurston County Agricultural Committee. I served on the Pacific Mountain Private Industry Council during its early years of helping to provide employment and training opportunities to youth and adults in our region. I've been passionate for over 30 years about sustainable agriculture. The choices that urban America makes about food directly impact our rural communities and natural resources. That's why I worked hard on finding a permanent location for the Farmers Market downtown, which I believe contributes in important ways to the quality of life and vitality of Olympia. Now that we have a market, I can't imagine life in Olympia without one.

Right now, I'm still working towards food sustainability by volunteering at GRuB, supporting the work of staff there to help at-risk teens learn to do meaningful work helping low-income families grow their own food. I serve on the board of the Dispute Resolution Center, because of my interest in bringing people together and helping them work through conflicts and find more mutually satisfactory ways to live together. I've learned a lot in the last 25 years about managing large organizations, dealing with financing and budgets, working with professional staff, bringing community people together and fostering creativity, which I think are all skills useful to serving on the council.

What's the biggest environmental issue you see facing the city in the upcoming five to ten years?

There are so many serious issues: deadly overheating of our planet, natural resource depletion, decaying infrastructure. Some of the most important things that we can and should do something about locally have to do with water. We need to pay attention to our water supply, restore the water quality of our urban streams and the South Sound, and manage stormwater. We live between incredibly beautiful land and water here, and we need to act in ways that preserve the integrity of both.

Do you have any ideas about how the city budget can be balanced during these challenging times, with falling sales tax revenues?

Just from the way you framed the question, I can't help but put in a plug about sustainability. Our city sales tax receipts are down between 18 and 20 percent, that's about $2 million less than we expected to have for City services. We can produce and consume more locally. If we do that creatively, we will both improve our quality of life and ensure that we have revenue to do the things we need to do to sustain our community. I am always going to be looking for ways to promote local commerce and ways to use our purchasing power to promote our vision of community – promoting processing of local foods, reusing packaging and ways to link consumption as directly as possible to production. That's what I've been about for thirty years, starting with my work on sustainable agriculture.

About 15 percent of the city budget goes to employee benefits – soaring health care costs contribute to our budget challenges. We need a healthcare system that works and Councilmembers should be asking our federal representatives for one.

We need to make sure that the different parts of the City's operations actually pay their fare share of all their costs, and make what their actual costs are clear so the public can help make realistic informed judgments about our priorities. For example, we need to be sure that things like permit costs don't just cover salaries, but cover their fair share of all the other costs of keeping the operation going. We need to make certain that people understand the trade-offs in how we're setting public utility rates, which I think may be low compared with other cities our size. When we do have to cut something like afterschool programs, we need to look ahead and work out alternative solutions well in advance, not by running around at the last minute. We need to make certain that our budget process is fully inclusive, easy to understand, and helps educate citizens about trade offs.

Budgets are one of my strengths -- I have extensive experience managing both operating and capital budgets, and I have a lot of ideas about how to manage the city's budget, probably more than your readers want to know about.

Unfortunately, budgets are one of my weaknesses. But I find it reassuring, especially given the alarming state of the economy, to be able to vote for a candidate who has experience working with them.

I feel that it's very important for council members to work to demystify the budget process, make sure it is transparent, and help citizens understand where their money is going and participate in making the hard choices we'll be dealing with.

What city services would you consider untouchable as far as budget cuts?

Nothing. We know that we need to preserve health and safety programs. At the same time that doesn't mean that we can't look for ways to improve efficiency and possibly partner with other local governments.

What do you think about Olympia's downtown? Is it decaying, or is it a treasure?

My immediate response is both. We have a decaying treasure. We need to give it support and attention in a way that values what's unique about it. Downtown is doing about as well as anywhere, given the economy. We shouldn't think that there is something wrong with our downtown. The people in our downtown are wonderful; we need to do more to support our downtown merchants. They're the frontline investors in making Olympia a wonderful place to be.

I know that you are opposed to high rise development on Olympia's isthmus. What kind of development do you think would be more appropriate for Olympia?

I have an extensive background in affordable housing development. Olympia is well suited for projects at a smaller scale, and we could do more to encourage those. Developing housing downtown depends on providing parking solutions people actually like, and on access to the things that people want to have close to where they live. Requiring underground parking inside multifamily housing projects downtown can make costs very high; there are ways we might collaborate with developers to create appropriately scaled housing projects of three or maybe four stories with nearby parking facilities built in a public-private partnership. I would be interested in exploring options like this, being mindful that we really can't force the market to go where it doesn't want to go. The important thing is making downtown work for the merchants that are there and building on the unique features of downtown; the more attractive and interesting downtown becomes, the more people and developers will follow.

What do you like best about Olympia?

Our quality of life, and the many people who live here who are willing to work to preserve and enhance it.

What inspired you to run for Olympia City Council at this particular time?

I believe deeply in public service. My choice to run for the city council is really an affirmation of how much I believe that local action is one of the most meaningful ways to address our larger problems. In many ways it's like a homecoming for me. I could continue to pursue my public service career at a state or national level, but I truly believe that there are opportunities to address all those things I care about --environment, social justice, sustainable development -- right here.

Why have you chosen to run for position #5, against Jeff Kingsbury, in particular?

We need to bring change to the Olympia City Council. Jeff and I simply don't agree about how things are going. He sees a council that is unified and decisive. I see a council that has divided citizens and become embroiled in stalemates. I want to give voters a choice. I'll work to make city government more open and more transparent instead of trying to arrange things behind the scenes. I have more experience developing downtown housing, successfully financing projects, and helping communities to achieve their own development goals than Jeff or anyone else on the Council. My running against Jeff will give voters a chance to speak for themselves about how well they think things are working. There is one fundamental thing we disagree on, and that's how things are going. I think it's time for the city to have a referendum on that – who they want to represent them, and how.

How's the campaign going? Is the experience of being a candidate what you expected, or has it surprised you?

I think it's going really well. I continue to be inspired by the people that have contacted me about the campaign and I am reconnecting with people that I first got to know years ago. It really is a homecoming for me in terms of reconnecting with the community. I continue to learn about our political process. I don't think it's so much a surprise as it is a confirmation about how very hard it is to do this work. I hope someday that I will be able to apply what I have learned towards developing a better system for electing people.

If elected, what would you most like to accomplish during your time as a councilmember?

I want to bring a different culture to city government. We need a council that inspires participation in public process, not one that shuts it out. I want to see stronger neighborhood associations. I'm encouraged about what's been happening when small amounts of seed money are provided to carry out neighbor-to-neighbor sustainability projects like last year's Sustainability Fair in the South Capitol neighborhood. I want to find ways of helping neighborhood associations tap the incredible creativity we have here in the community. I also want to make sure that we create an atmosphere in which the comprehensive plan can be developed in a collaborative way. Our Comp Plan should serve as a road map that can be used to measure progress in achieving what we want to happen in Olympia.

I saw on your website (nuprometheus.com/buxbaum/) that you grow food in your yard. I'm passionate about growing my own food, so I know there's at least one WIP reader interested in this subject, even if it's off-topic. So, what kinds of food do you grow in your garden? What's doing well this year?

I don't think it's off topic at all. The space that we created in our median for growing food has become an incredible public gathering place. I love having kids measure the passage of the year by how big our pumpkins are. I love it that people in our neighborhood stop by and share ideas about growing things in an urban environment. And, invariably, they share thoughts and ideas about all kinds of other things. It creates a space to share, it's making community happen.

But to answer your question, we grow about two dozen specialty fruits, and about three dozen kinds of vegetables. We grow about 60 percent of the fruits and vegetables we eat. My goal for next year is to be growing food a full twelve months out of the year. I think we'll be able to do that.

Right now I'm most impressed with our Cinderella pie pumpkins that we grow. Last year, we produced 62 quarts of frozen pie pumpkin. The Cinderella pie pumpkins have been a real hit in our neighborhood. They're beautiful to look at, and they grow throughout the median. Pumpkin pie is one of the better treats that you can give to a kid, if you don't use too much sugar: It's rich in vitamin A, there are eggs in it, so you've got some protein, you've got fiber, and kids think pumpkin pie is yummy – it even makes a pretty decent breakfast. Another thing I'm really excited about this year is our persimmons.

For more information, visit Stephen Buxbaum's website nuprometheus.com/buxbaum/.

Update info on upcoming City Council elections

WIP News Service

Filings for Olympia City Council closed on June 5. A primary election will be held August 18. The top two candidates in each race will advance to the general election on November 3.

City Council Seat #4: Karen Rogers – Opposes the Isthmus rezone

Karen Veldheer – Opposes the Isthmus rezone

Amy Tousley - Supports Isthmus rezone and development

Incumbent Karen Messmer is not running for re-election.

City Council Seat #5: Stephen Buxbaum – Opposes the Isthmus rezone

Janine Gates – Opposes the rezone

Elected incumbent Jeff Kingsbury – Supports Isthmus rezone and development.

City Council Seat #6: Jeannine Dellwo Roe – Opposes the rezone

James Wellings – Unknown positions

Appointed incumbent Joan Machlis - Supports Isthmus rezone and development

City Council Seat #7: Tony Sermonti – Supports Isthmus rezone and development

Elected incumbent Joe Hyer – Opposes the Isthmus rezone, but weakly.

Data below is current as of June 28.

City Council Seat #6 – updated to include information not available for the June issue of WIP.

Candidate: Jeannine Dellwo Roe

"My legislative experience has given me great insights into how to work constructively to make good decisions that benefit the majority, not just narrow interests."

Opponents: Joan Machlis, James Welling

Brief WIP bio: Former political spouse; works for State Democratic Caucus

Position on Isthmus: Opposes the rezone

Website: www.jeannineroe2009.org

Candidate bio: Jeannine Roe is a long time resident of Olympia, the proud mother of Allison and Julia Dellwo and works for the State Senate Democratic Caucus.

Campaign funds as of June 1: $1,900

Major Donors: Charles and Marilyn Roe (parents)

Endorsements: Senator Karen Fraser, Representative Sam Hunt, Citizens for a Responsive Local Government

Coffee Strong coffee house in Tillicum serves at full capacity. Photo by Robert Whitlock

Coffee Strong and G.I. Voice combat stop-loss campaign

by Molly Gibbs

I'm sitting in Coffee Strong, a comfortable coffeehouse for GI's in Lakewood, literally a stone's throw from Madigan and Ft Lewis. Copies of Edward Abbey's work, *Lessons Learned from the Spanish Civil War*, and Ron Suskind's *A Way of the World* are scattered on tables (and tucked behind the toilet paper roll in the restroom). There have been remarkable conversations taking place here. I feel honored to have been included, and realize Coffee Strong has incredible potential to continue changing lives.

What is most special about this place is the fact that it is owned and run by young Iraq vets. Every decision made honors a variety of soldiers' concerns. GI Rights counseling is offered daily, and a variety of services are available to soldiers. This is a difficult time, with three brigades scheduled to deploy this summer. About 10,000 soldiers will be leaving families, some for their third or fourth deployment.

Coffee Strong recognizes that in order to promote a façade of wellness, the Army routinely ignores soldier's mental and physical problems to hide the true number of walking wounded. A week ago, I talked with a young man from Colorado who had incredible wounds, and a strong spirit, as he described his battle to seek health care. It is clear the military will not continue concurrent occupations and take care of soldiers. The Coffee Strong brochure sums it up: "You Better Hope Your Momma Loves You, Because the Army Doesn't."

It's no surprise that absent medical and spiritual care, many soldiers self-medicate in desperation to alleviate their anguish, as well as the physical pain they suffer. We hear stories about military sexual assault, domestic violence, alcohol and drug abuse, all of which perpetuate our culture of violence. The larger community is separated from these crucial stories, and perhaps, from our part in the soldiers' war, fought "on our behalf."

Hearing the stories seems to me an essential part of healing, both for the soldier and for community members. I think about the soul as the drive or force to create and preserve what is valued most: family, community, freedom to create. When I have had opportunities to hear soldiers' stories, I have been startled by succinct comments, which I imagine encapsulate hours of reliving untold horrors. One man said, "What you do, you become."

The book I'm reading, Chris Hedges' *War is a Force that Gives Us Meaning*, is difficult. Chris Hedges knows war, indisputably. He captures what I'm just beginning to understand. A quote from Page 86:

"To be sure, soldiers who kill innocents pay a tremendous personal emotional and spiritual price. But within the universe of total war, equipped with weapons that can kill hundreds or thousands of people in seconds, soldiers only have time to reflect later. By then these soldiers often have been discarded, left as broken men in a civilian society that does not understand them and does not want to understand them."

Meanwhile, Coffee Strong plans include a national Stop-Loss campaign, to influence a significant policy change. Currently soldiers whose contracts are about to expire face an involuntary extension so they can be redeployed beyond their contracted term of duty. This is "Stop-Loss." Despite all odds, I believe this group of veterans and soldiers can pull off the relationship building and sacrifice to make this happen. I can't seem to get a "job" when there is nothing more satisfying than supporting this work. Check out the website, and if possible, donate $10 each month to be part of a growing movement to stop feeding soldiers to the vacuous war machine.

Despite all odds, I believe this group of veterans and soldiers can pull off the relationship building and sacrifice to make this happen.

Here's how you can help get the Stop-Loss campaign spreading to SoCal, Milwaukee, Madison, Norfolk, VA, Killeen, TX and further. Go to Coffeestrong.com and watch for our upcoming events. In Olympia, do not miss the July 26 Secret Café at 1901 Crestline NW. Activities begin at 5 p.m., and a $10 donation goes directly to support the Stop-Loss campaign underway now. You will be treated to two gourmet chefs' Mid-Eastern menu, acoustic music and a special guest artist, Iraq veteran Jonathan Matas. Matas received a Puffin Foundation grant to produce a painting that captures the work taking place through Coffee Strong. His painting will be auctioned; check out his work at jonathanmatas.com. Hear more from Coffee Strong vets. Tell family and friends—your donations are making a very real difference while building a national campaign to end Stop-Loss policy. There is no more effective way to invest in stopping war than from the inside-out.

For 15 years Molly Gibbs provided organizational consultation to health care systems in western Washington, and to state agencies. She facilitated and mediated conflicts among work teams, within departments, provided leadership training, and strategic planning sessions. For the past ten years Molly supports non-profit organizations, and leads fundraising-grant writing for Coffee Strong, the GI coffee house in Lakewood.

Rachel Corrie Foundation collaborates on mural, prepares Rafah delegation

Press Release

Let the art and the magic begin! The Olympia-Rafah Solidarity Mural Project (ORSMP), a unique collaboration between the Rachel Corrie Foundation for Peace and Justice and Break the Silence Mural Project, has entered phase two. The olive tree that arose in 2008 on the north side of the Labor Temple Building in downtown Olympia is about to leaf out!

With branches spanning 100 feet, the tree is expected to represent the largest Palestine solidarity mural in the world and will engage artists and activist organizations on a global scale. An inter-disciplinary, interactive, multi-site public art project, ORSMP recognizes the unique relationship between people of Olympia in Washington State and those of Rafah in the Gaza Strip--and the bond they share with all who struggle for justice. The project is a manifestation of communities using creativity in public space to cope with catastrophic and traumatic losses in resilient and transformative ways. Inspired by Rachel Corrie, an Olympian killed in the Gaza Strip in 2003 in a non-violent act of civil disobedience, the mural serves as a reminder of the thousands in Gaza and elsewhere lost in struggle, and, also, as inspiration for those who carry on quests for justice and for the unity and peace that the olive tree represents.

Artists and activist organizations locally and worldwide are responding to this summer's call to let the numerous and large 8X5 foot leaves of the tree unfold. Adorning them will be images and designs that reflect issues ranging from immigrant, indigenous, and prisoners' rights to racism and environmental justice. Through innovative use of culture and technology, the project will strengthen and provide visibility to the continuing movement for social change in Palestine, Israel, the US and the world. In subsequent phases, audio and video files associated with each image and accessible by cell and i-phone will provide lively and rich context. An interactive mural website will use networking tools to bring people together. Eventually, ORSMP will move to Rafah in the Gaza Strip where there are plans for a sister mural to be created through a public art process similar to the one here in Olympia.

ORSMP was envisioned and is directed by Dr. Susan Greene, a multidisciplinary community-based artist/activist, educator, and clinical psychologist from the San Francisco Bay area. She is one of four Jewish-American women artists who formed Break the Silence Mural Project in 1989 and who have worked ever since on collaborative public art projects in Palestine. Since 2007, ORSMP has been further elaborated by Olympia student interns, community volunteers and activists, staff at the Rachel Corrie Foundation and by Bay Area artists and activists connected to Break the Silence. The project has benefited immeasurably from the generous support and cooperation of the Labor Temple building owners, supportive local businesses, the Wallace Global Fund, the Middle East Children's Alliance (MECA), Olympia Salvage where leaves are being constructed from scrap wood and sheet metal, and numerous other donors.

Learn more about ORSMP--how to support it and be involved, and when and where to join community painting days, special workshops, and an October Peace Works mural celebration. Visit the project website at *olympiarafahmural.org* or contact local Project Coordinator, Alicia Martinson at *olympia@olympiarafahmural.org* or (360) 754-3998 (the Rachel Corrie Foundation). You can help the Olympia-Rafah Solidarity Mural Project realize its potential as a vibrant, educational, community-building effort that transcends boundaries.

by Cindy and Craig Corrie

This coming fall the Rachel Corrie Foundation for Peace and Justice will take its first delegation to the Gaza Strip. This delegation aims to further the work that Rachel Corrie began when she traveled to Gaza in 2003. Rachel chose to go to Rafah, Gaza to be in solidarity with one of the most forgotten places in the occupied territories. She had many goals while there, one of them was to build lasting relationships that would transcend borders, politics, and the physical space between her home town, Olympia, and Gaza.

Rachel's tragic murder, on March 16, 2003, cut these hopes short; however the Rachel Corrie Foundation continues the work that Rachel Corrie began and hoped to accomplish. And it is in keeping with Rachel's spirit and vision of a world based on understanding, respect and justice that we will travel to Gaza.

During our time in Gaza we will meet with Gazan friends, supporters, and community organizations and build upon past relationships to more effectively continue our work both in the US and in Palestine. We will visit family homes, refugee camps, hospitals, human rights organizations, universities, schools, youth and womens' centers, rural areas and places of environmental interest that highlight food chain, energy, and water issues.

Delegates will use their experience to broaden our local community's and the US public's understanding of the conflict. We aim to change the mainstream discourse of the Israeli/Palestinian conflict. To inform US foreign policy, upon return, outreach will extend to local, state, and national officials.

The Rachel Corrie Foundation for Peace and Justice invites you to support this effort by making a tax-deductible donation. Any level of support is appreciated and will allow us to invite lower income delegates to participate. Your donation will also assist us in dedicating the staff time necessary for organizing and planning this delegation. Donations can be mailed to the Rachel Corrie Foundation, 203 4th Ave. E Suite 307, Olympia, WA 98501 and be sure to earmark checks for "Delegation". We will also accept donations of frequent flyer miles. Please contact *serena@rachelcorriefoundation.org* to discuss this possibility or if you have any questions.

We hope to further the mission of the Rachel Corrie Foundation and the movement to end the occupation and to add to the growing discourse that challenges the legitimacy of oppression and war. This delegation reflects our long-term commitments to justice and freedom for the people of Gaza, and to peace, security, and universal human rights for all in Israel/Palestine.

We sincerely thank you for your support.

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Olympia police add video cameras to 3 crusiers

By Drew Hendricks

The Olympia Police Department recently applied for a Federal grant to fund installing cameras in three of its patrol cars. The video equipment, a server for storing the collected video, and the wireless connection for making the video transfers is expected to be installed by the end of 2009.

The Department's application for the grant will be submitted sometime in mid-July, and then Requests for Proposals will specify to potential vendors what it is the Department wants to purchase. The process for determining which proposal will be accepted is likely to produce a number of public documents which should prove interesting to cop-watchers. The proposed grant is in the amount of $21,000. This is almost as much money as the City of Olympia now spends on its "independent" auditor position.

The Department's application for the grant will be submitted...and then Requests for Proposals will specify to potential vendors what it is the Department wants to purchase.

The Olympia Police Department operates a wide variety of vehicles, almost 30 of which are Ford Crown Victoria models, commonly seen as patrol cars (although one is navy blue and is most often used by Lieutenants). The proposal to place three cameras in the cars is therefore a mere tithing, a ten percent solution which will not significantly increase the chances of a critical incident being witnessed by publicly owned video recordings. The proposal is essentially a test-run to see if the installed systems work well and should be installed fleet-wide.

In addition to the 30 patrol vehicles the Department operates, it also uses around nine detectives' vehicles leased on three-month terms from Enterprise Rentals, and there is so far no proposal to place in-car video in these. The Department also uses several trucks, vans, motorcycles, and small cars which would put the total number of vehicles at around 60. There are no known plans to place cameras in the other vehicles, on any timeline contemplated by the Department.

Drew Hendricks is an Olympia Copwatch organizer and Anarchist Secretly Surveilling and Holistically Observing Law Enforcement (citizen proctologist).

How Cuba got over the 50-year mark

by Brendan Funtek

The United States huffed and the United States puffed but the empire cannot blow down the Cuban revolution.

One of the most remarkable 20th century stories of anti-colonial resistance, Cuba, a mere 90 mile neighbor from U.S. coastline, practically the abdomen lining in the belly of the beast, has retained the government and movement necessary to sustain a society not beholden to corporate interests.

With remarkable advancements in the agricultural and medical fields, a worldwide community of scientists, educators, planners and dreamers have long praised the Cuban model -- itself a transitory, adaptive style that is repeatedly reinvented from a structurally devastating U.S. economic blockade.

Due to Congressional Acts such as the Helms-Burton and Torricelli, passed soon after the Soviet empire (a necessary trade partner for a country stubbornly refusing to be re-invaded by U.S. corporations and the mafia) collapsed, Cuba suffers from trade restrictions globally condemned by the United Nations general assembly of voting nations on an annual basis.

Cuba is forced to operate through convoluted, second-hand trade methods to receive the most basic foreign trade any island would need to operate from.

Despite these high hurdles of U.S. intimidation, Cuba hasn't even needed to challenge Goliath so much as show it a dignified way to live.

Horrendous hurricanes passed through the island last year among numerous Carribean and Gulf allies yet Cuba managed to safely shelter its citizens with coordinated, interactive evacuation methods. Unfortunately, countries like Haiti, and to use an example from three years ago -- our own victims from Katrina, stand as sobering reminders of how terrifying life can get when the most basic government obligations to protect us aren't provided.

However, the reality of significant structural damage that will take years to rebuild faces Cuba after the hurricanes.

An American material aid caravan -- Pastors for Peace -- that takes in people of all beliefs from the world over has worked since last summer to help Cuba with construction supplies.

This caravan is ideologically opposed to the U.S. trade blockade and openly passes through the U.S.-Mexico border with declared intention to deliver material aid to Cuba.

In previous years, the U.S. border patrol and homeland security [*sic*] have apprehended some of the caravan's aid in a futile chest thump to reinforce its Cold War paranoia and satisfy aging Cuban expatriates who want their land and mansions back.

The caravan has always found a friend in the Olympia community and we hope to sustain that relationship with an event at Fertile Ground on July 7 from 6-9 p.m. Check the announcements section on page two for more details and visit pastorsforpeace.org to find out how you can join the caravan. Venceremos!

Records request finds local activists in a national surveillance program

By Brendan Maslauskas Dunn

An SDSer (Students for a Democratic Society) in Portland is walking down the street on May Day. She walks by a police officer sitting outside a café flipping through photographs of different people the police plan on identifying at a May Day rally. A picture of her appears and the cop stares at it for a while.

Two SDSers are marching at a poor people's march in St. Paul during the Republican National Convention. They strike up a conversation with a marcher who claims he is in New York City SDS and an Air Force veteran from New Jersey. He starts spreading false rumors about prominent activists in SDS and then attempts to incite the two Olympia SDSers to commit acts of violence at the march.

A stranger creates a Facebook account and starts friending members of Iraq Veterans Against the War, SDS and anarchists in Olympia, Tacoma and Seattle. She has Animal Liberation Front, Earth Liberation Front, and SDS pictures on her profile and bomb-making instructions. Nobody seems to know her, but she's apparently a very accomplished activist in the region. She's taken an interest in IVAW, SDS and the anarchist group Common Action. A friend of hers has also appeared out of nowhere.

Thurston County Sheriffs hack onto the private attorney-client listserv and gather information to disrupt an activist trial in 2007 and have the trial dismissed on the fault of the defense. They, and possibly other agencies, repeatedly attempt to sign on to activist listservs in the Northwest, especially at times leading up to port actions.

Secret cameras appear across the street from the anarchist Pitchpipe Infoshop in Tacoma. Strangers appear at events Pitchpipe organizes and take information, a head count and leave, just as soon as they had appeared.

During the Port of Grays Harbor actions in 2007, a group of activists is pulled over en route to Aberdeen by State troopers. "Three known anarchists" were in the car according to police, and there was some sort of tracking on the car. There were pictures of a car the driver had been driving the other day in the police cruiser.

Sound scary? That's just the beginning of it.

A number of public records requests were just received from a request through the Olympia General Membership Branch of the Industrial Workers of the World (IWW) on anything the city had about anarchy/anarchism/anarchists, the IWW and SDS. The results came in and although the city isn't providing the more damning information, they have sent out hundreds of files and emails that are pretty chilling.

A number of public records requests were just received from a request through the Olympia IWW on anything the city had about anarchy/anarchism/anarchists, the IWW and SDS.

Apparently, the City of Olympia and Olympia Police Department (OPD), with help from Washington State Patrol (WASP), the Evergreen Police and several other agencies, have been involved in a national surveillance program on activists and different leftist groups. One of the groups targeted is SDS. This program, which is still active under the Obama administration, has brought the attention of intelligence units and officers from the Army and Air Force as far away as New Jersey, the FBI, Homeland Security, Washington Joint Analytical Center (WAJAC) and many other municipal, state and federal agencies on the activists of Olympia.

Some of the groups targeted besides SDS are Port Militarization Resistance (PMR), the IWW, Movement for a Democratic Society (MDS, which is not active in the Northwest), environmental activists, the ever-secretive Port Liberation Front, and last but not least "the anarchists".

Since the records just came out and are still being sifted through, only a few things will be published at this time for people to taste. Others who have done records requests will compile what information they have to date and, hopefully soon, make documents accessible to the public.

Over the summer, a report will be released documenting government and police surveillance on anarchists and activists in Olympia, Tacoma, Spokane, Portland, Seattle and other locations in the Northwest where police have been more active than usual in the last few years.

Here's a taste for now:

1. It turns out that the Evergreen police, OPD and WASP were planning on interrupting the graduation ceremony last year at Evergreen and went so far as to set up staging areas and dress in riot gear if SDS planned on making a significant demonstration in the midst of the sit-in.

2. The police break down "groups" of demonstrators into categories for port actions. The groups are broken down into the Olympia Movement for Justice and Peace/PMR/SDS crowd, anti-militarist/war crowd, pacifists and anarchists (which are, in other documents broken down yet again by Tacoma anarchists, Olympia anarchists, SDS and the Port Liberation Front).

3. One document had this to say: "...Olympia SDS, composed primarily of Evergreen State students, is the most vulnerable to being swayed by anarchist tactics or assuming a mob mentality."

4. For whatever reason, city officials and the OPD have taken a recent interest in the IWW and, in particular, the IWW's project to end Special Ed Forced Labor. The OPD and City Planning and Development also worked together in the past to steal property owned by the IWW such as the union's newspaper box located downtown.

5. The military and police were concerned when "the anarchists" started operating through the Port Liberation Front. (Funny. I don't even know if this group exists.)

6. US Capitol Police worked closely with the OPD and Evergreen Police gathering information on Olympia SDS about anything related to the lead up to the Democratic National Convention demonstrations. The Evergreen Police approached school officials at this time and attempted to get information on SDS.

7. One Thomas Rudd who works for US Army IMCOM had this to say about one Olympia activist: "Jeff Berryhill, a longtime activist and key organizer associated with Olympia SDS, OLY PMR, and anarchists was just arrested at Port of Tacoma..." and had much more on-the-ground information he sent from his cell phone to the military about the port actions in Tacoma last summer.

8. Chief of Evergreen Police Ed Sorger seems ever too happy in forwarding any emails he gets on SDS to the Olympia Police Department.

9. At least one, but most likely more, OPD agents are avid readers of local activist Wally Cuddeford's blog.

10. There are one or more people who regularly forward emails from the OMJP listserv to the OPD and City officials.

This is just the beginning. It would be interesting to see what kind of national surveillance program on activists is in effect, how it operates and who they are spying on. Aside from other police surveillance on communities hit even harder (poor communities, communities of color, immigrant communities) and on other activists snagged in the Green Scare, it will be interesting to see what kind of information the police have been gathering locally on SDSers, PMR, OMJP, other activists and the "self-proclaimed anarchists" of the region.

If you have any further information on police and government surveillance, please email olympiasds@riseup.net.

Brendan Maslauskas Dunn is a local activist and member of SDS, the IWW and Common Action.

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The healthcare crisis and the people it affects

By Barbara Thoman

Jennifer and Joseph

Jennifer sat in the emergency room waiting for the doctor to finish examining her husband, Joseph. He had a sore on his big toe a couple of weeks ago. She knew that the prognosis was not going to be good. He had an infection and it was spreading. Dr. James told them that they were going to have cut off his big toe and possibly his whole foot. The surgery couldn't wait. Dr. James said this was a common problem with people who had diabetes.

About five minutes later, a woman from admitting came into the room. She took the basic demographics: name, date of birth, social security number, and emergency contact information. She then asked what type of insurance would be billed. What insurance? They didn't have any insurance, they just couldn't afford it. Jennifer told her they didn't have any insurance. The woman said not to worry about it that there were programs available and that a financial counselor would come in and discuss the options with them before Joseph was discharged. Joseph signed the consent forms. Jennifer watched as he was wheeled to the operating room.

A couple of hours later the surgeon came out to tell Jennifer how the surgery went. He told her that there was a lot of damage and they couldn't save Joseph's foot. He was unsure if Joseph would be able to keep his leg as it was also damaged but they were going to take a wait and see approach. She was told that Joseph would soon be taken to his room on the fifth floor if she cared to wait for him there. Jennifer watched as her husband was wheeled into the room.

Once discharged from the hospital, he would be fitted with a prosthesis and then have outpatient rehab for a few months. Jennifer knew this was going to be hard on him. He was a proud man, the main source of income for their household making about $3333 a month as a self-employed contractor who did most of the work himself. Joseph made a decent wage but now he was not going to be able to do this type of work, at least for a while. Jennifer knew that the hospital and doctor bills would take what they have in savings. How were they going to cope?

As Jennifer was thinking about all of these concerns there was a knock on her door and a person came into the room identifying herself as Claire, a financial counselor at the hospital. Claire went over the charity application with them and then helped them to complete an application for Medicaid. She told them that they would be over income for General Assistance or GAU state program as Jennifer was currently employed making about $1500 a month but they might be eligible for another program called non-grant medical assistance or NGMA. Claire explained that she would start the charity process; however, she would have to wait for a denial from Medicaid before processing the application. She was pretty sure it would be denied as they did have some resources and need to sell them before the state would even consider helping them out. Claire said that once the application was sent to DSHS a referral would be sent to DDD to determine if he was considered disabled. She said it could take 90 days or longer for this to come back with a determination.

A few months later Joseph received a denial letter. The letter said he was not considered disabled for 12 continuous months as he would be able to find gainful employment. Jennifer called to see if she could appeal the decision but she was surprised to learn that not only was he not considered disabled but they also were over resource level because they owned a travel trailer and had $1900 in savings. The savings was now gone but the travel trailer alone (which was paid for) put them over the resource limit of $3000 for a two person household.

Samantha

Samantha, a 34 year old single woman, no children, was diagnosed with breast cancer, unable to work due to treatment. She has no income or medical insurance. She applies for GAU and is approved. She receives a $339 monthly grant. The cancer spreads to her lymph nodes. The cancer has now left her unable to drive. She has a limited amount of family support and must use public transportation to get to and from appointments. Samantha typically uses paratransit to get back and forth to her medical appointments as they will accept her medical coupons and bill DSHS.

With the assistance of her social worker at DSHS she applies for social security. While waiting for that to be approved she has become eligible for GAX (a federally funded program). GAX covers all of her prescriptions, dental, medical care, and transportation needs to all medical appointments.

Due to the prognosis of her illness Samantha is approved for social security disability. She is no longer eligible for GAX as her income has increased to $800 per month making her over income for that program. Now her medical must be re-determined. She is still related to a medical program with the State of Washington because she is disabled. The medical program she is now eligible for is a medically needy program with a three or six month certification period. Samantha chooses a six month certification period with a spenddown of $756. She will only need to have a review once every 6 months rather than every 3 months.

Samantha will not have medical coverage until she can provide verification that she has incurred or still owes the $756 in medical bills (DSHS will never pay for these medical expenses). She can no longer use Paratransit until she meets the spenddown and receives a medical coupon. She also finds it difficult to get the medical care she needs. She has to pay up front for all medicine and has to make payment arrangements with the medical providers--she usually has to pay a portion of this upfront. She is not eligible for Medicare for 29 months from the date of onset of her disability. Samantha now has to fight the cancer along with having to worry about how she is going to pay for her medical care.

> Now her medical must be re-determined. She is still related to a medical program with the State of Washington because she is disabled.

The problem

Having no medical insurance is a common problem that a lot of people who are uninsured face when a medical crisis comes their way. It affects people of all races, the unemployed, employed, disabled, and elderly. In all of the above examples there is no medical coverage to help them get continuous needed medical care for the long term. Each of them now has a pre-existing condition which most insurance companies won't cover - even if they were able to go back to work or pay for private insurance. We as a society have left them with no place to turn when they are in the fight for their lives!

We look towards the medical providers and ask them to write off these debts by either asking them to provide charity or to accept a state rate payment that is well below the normal standards paid by other insurance companies. In fact, providers will even say they won't bill DSHS as a secondary because it costs more to bill than what they would receive in payment. We ask how the medical profession could allow these people to go without medical treatment when they have the skills and the equipment to help them. People don't think about how much it costs them and the fact that they have to pay the overhead to pay their employees, their rent, and other expenses to keep their practice afloat; they also have their own families to feed.

The emergency rooms are being inundated with underinsured or uninsured patients daily. These are patients who generally cannot afford to go to the doctor as they don't have insurance or have limited coverage. They generally wait until a minor illness has progressed to a more serious ailment needing more care; which in turn raises the cost of care. Generally, the patient cannot afford to pay for the care that they receive. They in turn apply for charity, Medicaid, or just don't pay anything and allow the bills to go to collection. These costs are then passed on to the taxpayers and to other patients. The taxpayers help pay for a portion of the charity program and of course pay the medical bills if someone is on Medicaid. When a provider is not paid or not paid enough to cover their expenses those costs are then passed on to other patients. So by not having people adequately covered the costs still came back to the taxpayer, but in the meantime the patients who desperately need the care are unable to access it.

The solution

Just by reviewing a few cases in which people are trying to receive medical assistance when they are in a crisis shows how broken the current system is at this time. This doesn't even touch on the people who are trying to stay healthy and need the yearly physicals or need to see a doctor regarding something that seems minor but if not treated will turn into something life threatening. Granted there is not a shortcut or quick fix.

However, in my opinion, there are two changes that can be made that would make a huge difference in the health care of the healthy and the disabled in Washington State. The first change would be to get rid of the medical programs with spenddowns. These programs could be revised into a program where the client pays a small premium and maybe a coinsurance or a co pay which the amounts would be determined on a sliding scale based on income. This would make medical coverage seem more reachable and a client would be more apt to receive needed ongoing care without a break in coverage. The second change would be that every Washington state resident would have the right to get the yearly recommended physical exams. Everyone knows that early detection is the key in fighting any disease.

We as a society need to review our medical programs. Look at what works, why it is successful, and how it is implemented. We also need to look at what doesn't work, why it isn't working, and how the current programs could be improved. We need to find a way that a person, who has a serious illness no matter what kind, does not have to worry about losing their medical coverage. I know that there has been a lot of discussion about universal healthcare. I am not sure that is the answer, but I do believe that universal healthcare may be a viable option. We need to take care of everyone and the system we have currently is not working. Changing the current healthcare programs will be expensive but isn't the health and well-being of people more important?

But there are some dangers that are too big for any individual to overcome, especially the most vulnerable among us... We are all in this together—come what may. On that basis, we can truly honor the principle of equal protection for everyone. I personally believe that everyone needs a leg up once in a while and for some it lasts longer than for others. Still some are more broken than others but we all need to stick together and help each other out. In order for the healthcare crisis to be fixed we will all need to come together and find a solution no matter how long it takes.

Don't silence language learning

amelie ray on behalf of CIELO

As the lawmakers' agreed-upon $4 billion Washington state budget cuts start coming into effect, numerous community organizations are struggling or are being cut. We need to take the opportunity to comprehend how to support educational work that has made our communities prosper. The CIELO Project, a non-profit 510 (c) (3) located at Radio Ranch has focused on serving low-income Latino marginalized families for the last 13 years. However, 85% of the budget has been cut from last year. Families who have relied upon the provisions of CIELO are working with volunteers to call upon the larger community to request everyone's support.

CIELO blends an offering of ESL, Spanish and computer literacy classes with free childcare and family support services giving a whole approach to education and life. Starting out classes with singing, and then breaking into level classes, CIELO builds community at Radio Ranch. More than 500 people utilized CIELO resources last year. Though most classes are offered at Radio Ranch, a facility owned by the Cook Brothers Educational Foundation off of Martin Way, CIELO also has offered classes on the West Side of Olympia as to give access of their services to even more people. Students, children, families and volunteers are all continually present on the ranch that hopefully will be able to raise the $107,000 needed to keep the work in action.

With historical xenophobia and racism influencing the colonized U.S.'s traditional approach to the definitiveness of the English language, many English language learners have a traumatic language learning experience in the U.S. This language acquisition trauma acts as another force of the contemporary systematic policing that occurs upon non-native English speakers. The necessity for the availability of language teaching with a positive analysis cannot be ignored. Focusing on support of empowerment through knowledge and communication will act as tools towards strengthening our communities and providing more equal access to resources.

We the people have the ability to make change. Please attend the July 19th Viva CIELO: A Secret Café CIELO fundraiser, the start of a year long fundraising campaign. We must support each other in order to grow. We must communicate with each other in order to know.

To learn more about fundraising efforts at CIELO, contact Scott Saunders at *scotts@scattercreek.com* or Hilary Hacker at *hilhack4paz@gmail.com*.

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Spinning the Honduran coup

Latin America media battle continues

By Nikolas Kozloff

Read or listen to the mainstream media these days and you get the impression that Sunday's coup in Honduras was all about a simple disagreement over the constitutionality of presidential term limits. But as the coup unfolds it's becoming clear that the authorities want something more: the restoration of Honduras's conservative political order and an end to President Manuel Zelaya's independent foreign policy which had reached out to leftist countries like Cuba and Venezuela.

As part of their effort to consolidate power officials have moved quickly to restrain the free flow of information, in particular by cracking down on progressive leaning media. Only TV stations sympathetic to the newly installed coup regime have been left alone while others have been shut down. The climate of repression is similar to what we have seen elsewhere in Latin America in recent years. Specifically, there are eerie parallels to the April 2002 coup in Venezuela when the briefly installed right wing government imposed a media blackout to further its own political ends.

Perhaps somewhat tellingly, the Honduran army cut off local broadcasts of the Telesur news network which is sponsored by leftist governments including Venezuela, Uruguay, Argentina and Cuba. Adriana Sivori, Telesur's correspondent in Tegucigalpa, was in her hotel room speaking on the telephone to her network when ten soldiers arrived with rifles drawn. The men unplugged Telesur's editing equipment in an effort to halt the network's coverage of protests in support of ousted President Manuel Zelaya.

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When a soldier lightly slapped Sivori's hand so she would hang up, the journalist grew alarmed. "They're taking us prisoner at gunpoint," she remarked. Sivori along with producer María José Díaz and cameraman Larry Sánchez were taken to an immigration office in a military caravan. There, the authorities beat them and demanded to see their Honduran visas. Shortly later, the journalists were released. However, the authorities have warned Telesur journalists to cease transmitting images in support of Zelaya or face further detention.

What is so important about Telesur in particular? In my latest book, *Revolution! South America and the Rise of the New Left* (Palgrave, 2008) I devote considerable attention to the rise of the new station, itself a product of South America's stormy political battles and contested media landscape. First launched in 2005, Telesur represents Venezuela's effort to counteract the power of the right wing media establishment which played a role in the short-lived April coup of 2002 against the Chávez government. Seen as South America's answer to Al Jazeera and CNN, the station has been spearheaded by Andrés Izarra, up until recently the station's president. A rising star in the Chávez administration, Izarra got his start as a journalist at NBC and CNN. Disgusted by right wing media coverage of the 2002 coup, he started to work for Telesur.

Since its launch, Telesur has given CNN en Español a run for its money and now has slick production values. Station Director Aram Aharonian says the news industry has gone through a dumbing down since the Gulf War. Journalism, Aharonian remarked to me during our interview in Caracas, had become instantaneous but also devoid of any investigation, analysis or debate. Telesur, by contrast, was "rescuing" journalistic ethics by providing context and opinions about goings-on. While you can expect to see more critical coverage of the Iraq War on Telesur than most mainstream U.S. media outlets, Aharonian says Telesur is independent and doesn't have any particular political axe to grind.

> Even as hundreds of protesters rallied at the presidential palace in Tegucigalpa to demand Zelaya's reinstatement, radio and TV stations made little reference to the demonstrations.

Such assurances aside, the conservative establishment views Telesur as a threat. When the station announced a content-sharing agreement with Al Jazeera in 2006, Connie Mack, a right-wing Republican congressmember from Florida, remarked that the decision was designed to create a "global television network for terrorists." In light of Sivori's recent detention, one may surmise that the Honduran coup regime agrees with Mack's fanatical views.

In Latin America, media has become a crucial fault line in the battle between the pro-U.S. elite and the incipient left "Pink Tide" which has been sweeping into power. In Honduras, the coup regime has not only gone after Telesur but also Channel 8, the official broadcaster of the Zelaya government. The moves prompted Venezuela's official Bolivarian News Agency as well as Cuba's Granma newspaper to issue formal letters of protest. Meanwhile a climate of fear and intimidation reigns throughout the capital, with networks providing scant coverage of political protest. Soldiers are reportedly guarding local television and radio stations.

In recent years Zelaya had been embroiled in a war with the conservative private media in the country. Now that the President is gone, these outlets have rallied in defense of the coup regime. Honduras' two leading radio networks, Radio América and Radio HRN, have urged Hondurans to resume their normal routine and not to protest. Even as hundreds of protesters rallied at the presidential palace in Tegucigalpa to demand Zelaya's reinstatement, radio and TV stations made little reference to the demonstrations. Instead of reporting on political goings-on, the Honduran media outlets played tropical music or aired soap operas and cooking shows.

It's reminiscent of the April, 2002 coup against Chávez when conservative media station Venevisión refused to cover pro-Chávez demonstrations and preempted its normal news coverage with a day-long marathon of American films such as *Lorenzo's Oil*, *Nell*, and *Pretty Woman*. Venevisión, which substituted nonstop vitriolic anti-Chávez propaganda for its regular programming in the days leading up to the coup, was owned by billionaire media magnate Gustavo Cisneros, himself a leading figure in the Chávez opposition who reportedly bankrolled the opposition's takeover of government.

In Venezuela, conservative coup leaders misjudged the popular mood. Amidst street protests, Chávez was reinstated in two days. In the wake of the coup Venevisión began to moderate its strident tone and the Venezuelan President went on the political offensive by spurring the creation of Telesur as well as other media outlets. If you flip the TV dial today you can still watch rabidly anti-Chávez stations like Globovisión, though the playing field has been leveled considerably. In addition to Telesur Venezuelans can also watch Venezolana de Televisión, a government channel, as well as state sponsored Vive which provides discussion on Venezuelan culture and politics. Chávez has his own TV talk show, Aló, Presidente, and there are dozens of pro-government papers including a tabloid called VEA.

The antagonistic media environment in Venezuela is echoed in other left-leaning countries in South America. Indeed, the newly elected Pink Tide regimes have taken on the private media with a vengeance: in Ecuador, President Rafael Correa has proposed that the constitution disallow bankers from financing media outlets. According to him, Ecuadoran television is controlled by powerful interests and the Association of Television Channels is nothing more than a "bankers club." In Bolivia, indigenous President Evo Morales launched a weekly radio show called The People Are News. The show airs for two hours each week on the Patria Nueva (New Fatherland) state network.

If Zelaya returns to power in Honduras, which seems likely, then we could see the government take on the power of private TV, radio and the like more significantly, perhaps by emphasizing more state media. It will be merely the latest chapter in the ongoing information war between the conservative, globalizing elite and more left-leaning leaders who are coming to power throughout the region.

Nikolas Kozloff is the author of Revolution! South America and the Rise of the New Left *(Palgrave-Macmillan, 2008) Visit his blog at http://www.senorchichero.blogspot.com/*

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